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Senate approves direct wine shipping bill

LANSING – Wineries could ship up to 1,500 cases per year directly to Michigan consumers under legislation approved Thursday by the Michigan Senate, said Sen. Ron Jelinek.

“Our local wineries will be able to continue a practice they have done for 30 years - selling and shipping wine to consumers around Michigan,” said Jelinek, R-Three Oaks. “This legislation is a good balance between keeping alcohol out of the hands of minors while keeping our wineries in business and helping them expand.”

The legislation is the result of months of negotiations between legislators, consumers, wholesalers and wineries. Under the package, sellers would be required to apply for a permit that would allow them to direct ship up to 1,500 cases of wine to consumers each year. Sellers also would be required to submit quarterly reports to the Liquor Control Commission and pay all applicable sales and excise taxes.

Provisions in place for protecting minors include: the consumer must send a copy of their identification to the winery, the package must be marked as containing alcohol and the shipping company must check the ID of the person accepting the delivery.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently struck down Michigan’s law banning direct wine shipments from outside the state while allowing shipments from in-state wineries because it discriminated against out-of-state sellers.

The bills now go to the House for consideration.

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